WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of modulating the activity of a mammalian type II topoisomerase enzyme comprising contacting said enzyme with a compound that inhibits enzyme-mediated cleavage of a polynucleotide substrate.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said compound forms a stable non-covalent ternary complex comprising said enzyme, said polynucleotide, and said compound.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said inhibition comprises preventing the formation of said enzyme-polynucleotide complex.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammal is a human.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammal is a domestic animal.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein said polynucleotide substrate is selected from the group consisting of DNA, RNA and a DNA-RNA hybrid.

7. The method according to claim 1, wherein said enzyme is associated with a mammalian disease, and wherein said compound inhibits the progression of said disease.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein said disease is a cancer.

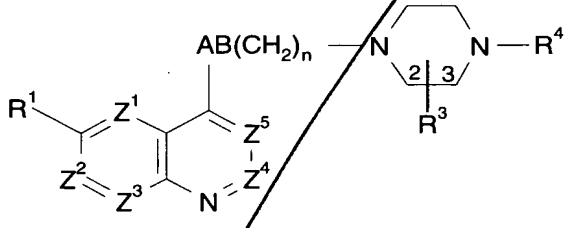
9. The method according to claim 8, wherein contact with said compound inhibits replication of cancer cells.

10. The method according to claim 7, wherein said contacting step occurs *in vitro*.

11. The method according to claim 7, wherein said contacting step occurs *in vivo* in a mammal.

12. The method according to claim 7, wherein said contacting step occurs *ex vivo*.

13. The method according to claim 1, wherein said compound is a compound of formula (Ia) or a pharmaceutically acceptable derivative thereof:



(Ia)

wherein:

one of Z^1, Z^2, Z^3, Z^4 and Z^5 is N, one is CR^{1a} and the remainder are CH, or one of Z^1, Z^2, Z^3, Z^4 and Z^5 is CR^{1a} and the remainder are CH;

R^1 is selected from hydroxy; (C_{1-6}) alkoxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxy, amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino optionally N-substituted by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups, NH_2CO, hydroxy, thiol, (C_{1-6})alkylthio, heterocyclylthio, heterocyclyloxy, arylthio, aryloxy, acylthio, acyloxy or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyloxy; (C_{1-6})alkoxy-substituted (C_{1-6})alkyl; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; nitro; azido; acyl; acyloxy; acylthio; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphoxide; arylsulphonyl; arylsulphoxide or an amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino group optionally N-substituted by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups, or when one of Z^1, Z^2, Z^3, Z^4 and Z^5 is N, R^1 may instead be hydrogen;

R^{1a} is selected from H and the groups listed above for R^1;

R^3 is hydrogen; or
R^3 is in the 2- or 3-position and is:
carboxy; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by hydroxy, (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; cyano; tetrazolyl; 2-oxo-oxazolidinyl optionally substituted by R^{10}; 3-hydroxy-3-cyclobutene-1,2-dione-4-yl; 2,4-thiazolidinedione-5-yl; tetrazol-5-

ylaminocarbonyl; 1,2,4-triazol-5-yl optionally substituted by R^{10}; or 5-oxo-1,2,4-oxadiazol-3-yl; or

R^3 is in the 2- or 3-position and is (C_{1-4})alkyl or ethenyl substituted with any of the groups listed above for R^3 and/or 0 to 3 groups R^{12} independently selected from:

thiol; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; amino optionally mono- or disubstituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; oxo; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or (C_{1-6})aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl;
provided that when R^3 is disubstituted with hydroxy or amino and carboxy containing substituents these may optionally together form a cyclic ester or amide linkage, respectively;

wherein R^{10} is selected from (C_{1-4})alkyl; (C_{2-4})alkenyl; aryl; a group R^{12} as defined above; carboxy; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by hydroxy, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; cyano; or tetrazolyl;

R^4 is a group $-CH_2-R^5$ in which R^5 is selected from:

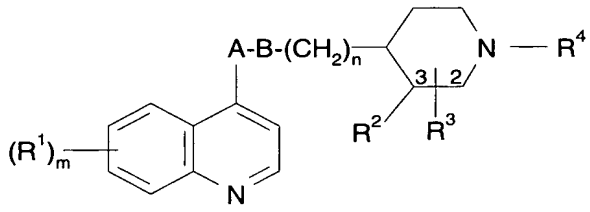
(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkoxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy-, (C_{1-12})alkoxy- or (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy-(C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; cyano(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{2-12})alkenyl; (C_{2-12})alkynyl; tetrahydrofuryl; mono- or di-(C_{1-12})alkylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; acylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkyl- or acyl-aminocarbonyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; mono- or di-

(C_{1-12})alkylamino(hydroxy) (C_{3-12})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl, phenoxy(C_{1-2})alkyl or phenyl(hydroxy)(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted diphenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{2-3})alkenyl; optionally substituted benzoyl or benzoyl(C_{1-3})alkyl; optionally substituted heteroaryl or heteroaryl(C_{1-2})alkyl;and optionally substituted heteroaroyl or heteroaroylmethyl;

n is 0, 1 or 2;
AB is $NR^{11}CO$, CO-CR^8R^9 or CR^6R^7-CR^8R^9 or when n is 1 or 2, AB may instead be O-CR^8R^9 or NR^{11}-CR^8R^9, or when n is 2 AB may instead be CR^6R^7-NR^{11} or CR^6R^7-O, provided that when n is 0, B is not CH(OH),
and wherein:
each of R^6 and R^7 R^8 and R^9 is independently selected from: H; thiol; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; halo; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyl; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy, amino or aminocarbonyl optionally substituted as for corresponding substituents in R^3; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or (C_{1-6})aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;
or R^6 and R^8 together represent a bond and R^7 and R^9 are as above defined;
and each R^{11} is independently H, trifluoromethyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;

or where one of R^3 and R^6, R^7, R^8 or R^9 contains a carboxy group and the other contains a hydroxy or amino group they may together form a cyclic ester or amide linkage.

14. The method according to claim 1, wherein said compound is:



(Ib)

wherein:

m is 1 or 2

each R^1 is independently hydroxy; (C_{1-6}) alkoxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxy, amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino optionally N-substituted by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups, NH_2CO, hydroxy, thiol, (C_{1-6})alkylthio, heterocyclylthio, heterocyclyloxy, arylthio, aryloxy, acylthio, acyloxy or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyloxy; (C_{1-6})alkoxy-substituted (C_{1-6})alkyl; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; nitro; azido; acyl; acyloxy; acylthio; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphoxide; arylsulphonyl; arylsulphoxide or an amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino group optionally N-substituted by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups;

either R^2 is hydrogen; and

R^3 is in the 2- or 3-position and is hydrogen or (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl optionally substituted with 1 to 3 groups selected from:

thiol; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; amino optionally mono- or disubstituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; oxo; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; or

R^3 is in the 3-position and R^2 and R^3 together are a divalent residue $=CR^{5'}R^{6'}$ where $R^{5'}$ and $R^{6'}$ are independently selected from H, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, aryl(C_{1-6})alkyl and aryl(C_{2-6})alkenyl, any alkyl or alkenyl moiety being optionally substituted by 1 to 3 groups selected from those listed above for substituents on R^3;

R^4 is a group $-CH_2-R^5$ in which R^5 is selected from:

(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkoxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy-, (C_{1-12})alkoxy- or (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy-(C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; cyano(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{2-12})alkenyl;

(C_{2-12})alkynyl; tetrahydrofuryl; mono- or di-(C_{1-12})alkylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; acylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkyl- or acyl-aminocarbonyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; mono- or di-(C_{1-12})alkylamino(hydroxy) (C_{3-12})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl, phenoxy(C_{1-2})alkyl or phenyl(hydroxy)(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted diphenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{2-3})alkenyl; optionally substituted benzoyl or benzoylmethyl; optionally substituted heteroaryl(C_{1-2})alkyl;and optionally substituted heteroaroyl or heteroaroylmethyl;

n is 0, 1 or 2;

A is NR^{11}, O, $S(O)_x$ or CR^6R^7 and B is NR^{11}, O, $S(O)_x$ or CR^8R^9 where x is 0, 1 or 2 and wherein:

each of R^6 and R^7 R^8 and R^9 is independently selected from: H; thiol; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; halo; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyl; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy, amino or aminocarbonyl optionally substituted as for corresponding substituents in R^3; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or (C_{1-6})aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;

or R^6 and R^8 together represent a bond and R^7 and R^9 are as above defined;

or R^6 and R^8 together represent –O- and R^7 and R^9 are both hydrogen;

or R^6 and R^7 or R^8 and R^9 together represent oxo;

and each R^{11} is independently H, trifluoromethyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;

provided that A and B cannot both be selected from NR^{11}, O and $S(O)_x$ and when one of A and B is CO the other is not CO, O or $S(O)_x$.

15. The method according to claim 1, wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of:

[3R,4R]-3-Ethyl-1-heptyl-4-[3-(R,S)-hydroxy-3-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)propyl]piperidine;

[3R,4R]-1-Heptyl-3-(1-(R)-hydroxyethyl)-4-[3-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)propyl]piperidine;

[3R,4R]-1-Heptyl-3-hydroxymethyl-4-[3-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)propyl]piperidine;

[2S]-1-Heptyl-4-[2-(R)-hydroxy-2-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)ethyl]-2-hydroxymethylpiperazine;

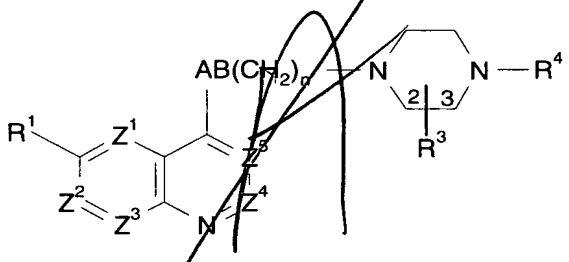
[2S]-2-Carboxymethyl-1-heptyl-4-[2-(R,S)-hydroxy-2-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)ethyl]piperazine trihydrochloride; and

1-Hydroxyheptyl-4-[2-(R)-hydroxy-2-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)ethyl]piperazine.

16. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound that inhibits the mammalian type II topoisomerase enzyme-mediated cleavage of a polynucleotide substrate in a pharmaceutically or physiologically acceptable carrier.

17. The composition according to claim 16, where said compound is selected from the group consisting of:

(A) a compound of formula (Ia) or a pharmaceutically acceptable derivative thereof:



(Ia)

wherein:

one of Z^1, Z^2, Z^3, Z^4 and Z^5 is N, one is CR^{1a} and the remainder are CH, or one of Z^1, Z^2, Z^3, Z^4 and Z^5 is CR^{1a} and the remainder are CH;

R^1 is selected from hydroxy; (C_{1-6}) alkoxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxy, amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino optionally N-substituted by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups, NH_2CO, hydroxy, thiol, (C_{1-6})alkylthio, heterocyclylthio, heterocyclyloxy, arylthio, aryloxy, acylthio, acyloxy or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyloxy; (C_{1-6})alkoxy-substituted (C_{1-6})alkyl; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; nitro; azido; acyl; acyloxy; acylthio; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphoxide; arylsulphonyl; arylsulphoxide or an amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino group optionally N-substituted

by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups, or when one of Z^1, Z^2, Z^3, Z^4 and Z^5 is N, R^1 may instead be hydrogen;

R^{1a} is selected from H and the groups listed above for R^1;

R^3 is hydrogen; or
R^3 is in the 2- or 3-position and is:
carboxy; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by hydroxy, (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; cyano; tetrazolyl; 2-oxo-oxazolidinyl optionally substituted by R^{10}; 3-hydroxy-3-cyclobutene-1,2-dione-4-yl; 2,4-thiazolidinedione-5-yl; tetrazol-5-ylaminocarbonyl; 1,2,4-triazol-5-yl optionally substituted by R^{10}; or 5-oxo-1,2,4-oxadiazol-3-yl; or

R^3 is in the 2- or 3-position and is (C_{1-4})alkyl or ethenyl substituted with any of the groups listed above for R^3 and/or 0 to 3 groups R^{12} independently selected from:

thiol; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; amino optionally mono- or disubstituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; oxo; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or (C_{1-6})aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl;
provided that when R^3 is disubstituted with hydroxy or amino and carboxy containing substituents these may optionally together form a cyclic ester or amide linkage, respectively;

wherein R^{10} is selected from (C_{1-4})alkyl; (C_{2-4})alkenyl; aryl; a group R^{12} as defined above; carboxy; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by hydroxy, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenylsulphonyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; cyano; or tetrazolyl;

R^4 is a group $-CH_2-R^5$ in which R^5 is selected from:

(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkoxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy-, (C_{1-12})alkoxy- or (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy-(C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; cyano(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{2-12})alkenyl; (C_{2-12})alkynyl; tetrahydrofuryl; mono- or di-(C_{1-12})alkylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; acylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkyl- or acyl-aminocarbonyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; mono- or di-(C_{1-12})alkylamino(hydroxy) (C_{3-12})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl, phenoxy(C_{1-2})alkyl or phenyl(hydroxy)(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted diphenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{2-3})alkenyl; optionally substituted benzoyl or benzoyl(C_{1-3})alkyl; optionally substituted heteroaryl or heteroaryl(C_{1-2})alkyl;and optionally substituted heteroaroyl or heteroaroylmethyl;

n is 0, 1 or 2;

AB is $NR^{11}CO$, $CO\text{-}CR^8R^9$ or $CR^6R^7\text{-}CR^8R^9$ or when n is 1 or 2, AB may instead be $O\text{-}CR^8R^9$ or $NR^{11}\text{-}CR^8R^9$, or when n is 2 AB may instead be $CR^6R^7\text{-}NR^{11}$ or $CR^6R^7\text{-}O$, provided that when n is 0, B is not CH(OH),

and wherein:

each of R^6 and R^7 R^8 and R^9 is independently selected from: H; thiol; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; halo; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyl; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy, amino or aminocarbonyl optionally substituted as for corresponding substituents in R^3; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or (C_{1-6})aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;

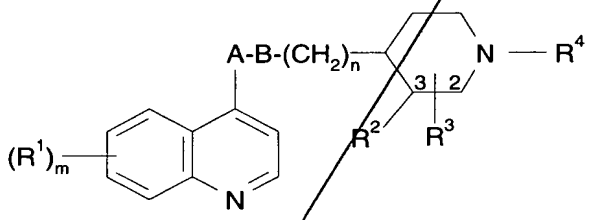
or R^6 and R^8 together represent a bond and R^7 and R^9 are as above defined;

and each R^{11} is independently H, trifluoromethyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl and optionally

further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;

or where one of R^3 and R^6, R^7, R^8 or R^9 contains a carboxy group and the other contains a hydroxy or amino group they may together form a cyclic ester or amide linkage;

(B) (Ib) or a pharmaceutically acceptable derivative thereof and process for their preparation:



(Ib)

wherein:

m is 1 or 2

each R^1 is independently hydroxy; (C_{1-6}) alkoxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxy, amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino optionally N-substituted by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups, NH_2CO, hydroxy, thiol, (C_{1-6})alkylthio, heterocyclylthio, heterocyclyloxy, arylthio, aryloxy, acylthio, acyloxy or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyloxy; (C_{1-6})alkoxy-substituted (C_{1-6})alkyl; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; nitro; azido; acyl; acyloxy; acylthio; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphoxide; arylsulphonyl; arylsulphoxide or an amino, piperidyl, guanidino or amidino group optionally N-substituted by one or two (C_{1-6})alkyl, acyl or (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl groups;

either R^2 is hydrogen; and

R^3 is in the 2- or 3-position and is hydrogen or (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl optionally substituted with 1 to 3 groups selected from:

thiol; halogen; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; amino optionally mono- or disubstituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl or aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl,

aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl or (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl and optionally further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, aminocarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; oxo; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{2-6})alkenyl; or

R^3 is in the 3-position and R^2 and R^3 together are a divalent residue $=CR^{5'}R^{6'}$ where $R^{5'}$ and $R^{6'}$ are independently selected from H, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{2-6})alkenyl, aryl(C_{1-6})alkyl and aryl(C_{2-6})alkenyl, any alkyl or alkenyl moiety being optionally substituted by 1 to 3 groups selected from those listed above for substituents on R^3;

R^4 is a group $-CH_2-R^5$ in which R^5 is selected from:

(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkoxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; hydroxy-, (C_{1-12})alkoxy- or (C_{1-12})alkanoyloxy-(C_{3-6})cycloalkyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; cyano(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{2-12})alkenyl; (C_{2-12})alkynyl; tetrahydrofuryl; mono- or di-(C_{1-12})alkylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; acylamino(C_{3-12})alkyl; (C_{1-12})alkyl- or acyl-aminocarbonyl(C_{3-12})alkyl; mono- or di-(C_{1-12})alkylamino(hydroxy) (C_{3-12})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl, phenoxy(C_{1-2})alkyl or phenyl(hydroxy)(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted diphenyl(C_{1-2})alkyl; optionally substituted phenyl(C_{2-3})alkenyl; optionally substituted benzoyl or benzoylmethyl; optionally substituted heteroaryl(C_{1-2})alkyl;and optionally substituted heteroaroyl or heteroaroylmethyl;

n is 0, 1 or 2;

A is NR^{11}, O, $S(O)_x$ or CR^6R^7 and B is NR^{11}, O, $S(O)_x$ or CR^8R^9 where x is 0, 1 or 2 and wherein:

each of R^6 and R^7 R^8 and R^9 is independently selected from: H; thiol; (C_{1-6})alkylthio; halo; trifluoromethyl; azido; (C_{1-6})alkyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyl; (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl; (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl; hydroxy, amino or aminocarbonyl optionally substituted as for corresponding substituents in R^3; (C_{1-6})alkylsulphonyl; (C_{2-6})alkenylsulphonyl; or (C_{1-6})aminosulphonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;

or R^6 and R^8 together represent a bond and R^7 and R^9 are as above defined;

or R^6 and R^8 together represent –O- and R^7 and R^9 are both hydrogen;

or R^6 and R^7 or R^8 and R^9 together represent oxo;

and each R^{11} is independently H, trifluoromethyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyl, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, aminocarbonyl wherein the amino group is optionally substituted by (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkenyloxycarbonyl, (C_{2-6})alkenylcarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl and optionally

further substituted by (C_{1-6})alkyl or (C_{1-6})alkenyl;

provided that A and B cannot both be selected from NR^{11}, O and $S(O)_X$ and when one of A and B is CO the other is not CO, O or $S(O)_X$;

(C) a compound selected from the group consisting of:

[3R,4R]-3-Ethyl-1-heptyl-4-[3-(R,S)-hydroxy-3-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)propyl]piperidine;

[3R,4R]-1-Heptyl-3-(1-(R)-hydroxyethyl)-4-[3-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)propyl]piperidine;

[3R,4R]-1-Heptyl-3-hydroxymethyl-4-[3-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)propyl]piperidine;

[2S]-1-Heptyl-4-[2-(R)-hydroxy-2-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)ethyl]-2-hydroxymethylpiperazine;

[2S]-2-Carboxymethyl-1-heptyl-4-[2-(R,S)-hydroxy-2-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)ethyl]piperazine trihydrochloride; and

1-Hydroxyheptyl-4-[2-(R)-hydroxy-2-(6-methoxyquinolin-4-yl)ethyl]piperazine.

18. The composition according to claim 16, having anti-cancer activity.

19. The composition according to claim 16, further comprising: an anticancer agent having a target other than topoisomerase.

20. A method for treating a disease in a mammal characterized by the abnormal behavior of a mammalian type II topoisomerase enzyme comprising administering to said mammal having said disease an effective amount of a pharmaceutical composition of claim 16.

21. The method according to claim 20, wherein said disease is a cancer.

22. The method according to claim 20, wherein said composition is administered by a route selected from intravenous, oral, intradermal, transdermal, intraperitoneal, intramuscular, subcutaneous, by inhalation and mucosal.

23. The method according to claim 20, wherein an effective amount of said compound comprises about .01 to about 500 mgs/surface area of mammalian subject body.

24. The method according to claim 20, wherein an effective dosage of said compound comprises about 1.5 mg/m^2 by intravenous infusion over 30 minutes daily for 5 consecutive days.

25. The method according to claim 20, wherein said mammal is a human.

26. The method according to claim 20, wherein said mammal is a domestic animal.

27. A method for identifying a compound useful to treat mammalian diseases characterized by the aberrant presence or activity of a mammalian type II topoisomerase comprising screening said compound for the ability to inhibit a mammalian type II topoisomerase-mediated cleavage of a polynucleotide substrate.

28. The method according to claim 27, wherein said compound is an anticancer compound.

29. The method according to claim 27, comprising determining that said compound forms a high molecular weight of out 230 Kda to 2000 Kda ternary complex with said enzyme and said polynucleotide substrate.

30. The method according to claim 29, wherein said determining step comprises adding a reaction mixture comprising in a buffer, a test compound, said enzyme, and said polynucleotide substrate to a size exclusion chromatographic column; and monitoring the fractions eluting from said chromatographic column to detect the fraction containing said ternary complex.

31. The method according to claim 29, further comprising detecting an intact complex comprising said polynucleotide and said enzyme.

32. The method according to claim 31, comprising reacting a test compound with said enzyme and polynucleotide substrate; quenching said reaction with a denaturant; and performing gel analysis to indicate if said polynucleotide is intact.

33. The method according to claim 32, wherein said screening step comprises a replication blockage assay.

34. A compound identified by the method of claim 27.

35. A method for screening for an anticancer compound comprising the steps of:
obtaining the crystal structure of a compound that inhibits the mammalian type II topoisomerase-mediated cleavage of a polynucleotide substrate; and
performing computer analysis to design or select from among test compounds, a compound having a substantially similar crystal structure.

36. The method according to claim 35, comprising the step of exposing said compound having said substantially similar crystal structure to a sample of cancer cells, and observing said cells for inhibition of replication, wherein the occurrence of inhibition is indicative of an anticancer compound.

37. The method of claim 2 wherein the compound forms a stable non-covalent ternary complex comprising said enzyme, said polynucleotide, and said compound, by contacting an enzymes DNA cleavage/reunion domain.

38. The composition according to claim 19, further comprising a compound selected from the group consisting of an alkylating agent, a nitrogen mustard, mechlorethamine hydrochloride, cyclophosphamide, ifosfamide, melphalan, chlorambucil, thiotepa, busulfan, a nitrosourea, carmustine, lomustine, carmustine, and dacarbazine, an antimetabolite, methotrexate, a pyrimidine analog, cytarabine, fluorouracil, a purine analog, mercaptopurine, a vinca alkaloid, vincristine sulfate, vinblastine sulfate, taxol, etoposide, doxorubicin hydrochloride, mitoxantrone hydrochloride, bleomycin sulfate, plicamycin, mitomycin, L-asparaginase, a platinum coordination complex, cisplatin, mitotane, hydroxyurea, procarbazine hydrochloride, diethylstilbestrol, estradiol cypionate, a steroid and prednisone.